To the Right worſhipful Sir Edward Boughton *Baronet, one of his Majeſties Juſtices of the Peace, and a Deputy-Lieutenant for the County of* Warwick, *and now a member of the honorable houſe of Commons.*

Honored Sir.

THis ſmall thing, that is now venturing abroad into the world, doth in a more eſpecial manner belong unto you. It was born under your roof, and that little ſtrength it hath ſince gathered, was in the ſame place. But alas! it is ſtill weak, and I fear, may not meet with that kindneſs and tenderneſs of compaſſion, which an innocent Infant might in reaſon expect. The parent of it doth therefore humbly crave your patronage and protection; and he doth the leſs ſcruple a grant of it, the requeſt being made to a perſon that hath been ever hoſpitable and charitable. And for this, Sir, you are ſo eminent in your own

own Country, that when (through the importunity of the whole Gentry of the County of *Warwick*) you did at length appear in the field as a competitor for a Knight of the Shire, I my self heard divers say, that it was pitty, that a Gentleman of so much Charity to the Poor, should be taken out of the Country. Nay! some did say, that they would give their votes against you meerly upon this score, to keep a Gentleman of such liberality to the poor and hospitality to all others, still amongst them. Now Sir, the God of mercy and compassion reward you for it, by continuing his temporal blessings to you here, and with a Crown of glory hereafter. And this shall be the constant prayer of

Your Worships móst humble

and most obliged Servant

Tho. Adderley.

To the Charitable, Chriſtian, and peaceably diſpoſed Reader.

A Preface, which at firſt I looked upon as uſeleſs, upon ſecond thoughts ſeemed little leſs then neceſſary. Not ſo much to importune favor, as equity and juſtice from the Reader. I am not ignorant that moſt things of the ſame nature with the enſuing tract, though written with never ſo good intentions and meaning, are apt enough to be miſconſtrued by ſome ill diſpoſed perſons; and the Authors of them, though earneſtly induſtrious for peace and unity, are ſure to be branded for the only diſturbers. Thoſe that go about to lay open the ſin and folly of ſome men, ſhall be ſure to find cenſurers enough; and if they cannot find any thing more to ſay, yet this they will be ſure to inſinuate, that we write not ſo much out of zeal to the truth or love to diſſenters, as out of deſign of advancing our ſelves, and of Eclipſing the repute and fame of others. This, I know, hath been the common reward of perſons, who for their excellent parts and pains have merited better things of them. And therefore I cannot much expect any other return. If they have called the Maſter of the Family Beelzebub, how much more will they call the Servant ſo? But I proteſt, that my main deſign, in publiſhing theſe papers, was meerly to mind our diſſenters of the folly and ſinfulneſs of keeping up a Schiſm in the Church, and widening it's breaches, ſince it is apparent, that it makes way for the entrance of the common Enemy. And if any one doth yet queſtion the truth of this, let him but ſeriouſly peruſe Doctor Oates his Narrative of the horrid Plot, and Conſpiracy of the Popiſh party, and that will plainly evince it, and ſhew that theſe perſons are but the Inſtruments of the Papiſts to bring about their deſigns. What dangers we have been in (at leaſt) if we are not ſo ſtill, of the Romans coming and taking away our place and Nation, ſurely they cannot but ſee. But would to God that their eyes were once opened to diſcern, that their perſiſtance in their ſeparation

tion from us, makes their paſſage to it the more eaſie. Sure enough, our differences and diſſentions are more then a little pleaſing to our adverſaries of Rome, who very much delight to look on and ſee our ſcuffles, and clap their hands at the ſport, ſaying, Aha, ſo would we have it. The very manner of relating the contention betwixt Abraham's and Lot's Servants is very obſerveable. Gen. 13. 7. And there was a ſtrife between Abraham's Herdsmen, and the Herdſmen of Lot's Cattel; and the Canaanite and Perizzite then dwelled in the Land. Which ſurely was inſerted by the Spirit of God, as no ſmall aggravation of the unſeaſonableneſs of the ſtrife. But it is much to be thought, that the Canaanite and the Perizzite, or, that which is as bad, the Fryar and the Jeſuit, are not meerly lookers on, but they have a very near intereſt in our ſtrifes, by ſtrong and ſecret influences, cauſing and fomenting differences and contentions, and kindling ſparks into a flame. Surely the hand of Joab is in this matter.

This then being ſo apparent, what Chriſtian, much more, what Proteſtant Miniſter, could forbear a little ſharpneſs againſt our blind, or, that which is worſe, obſtinate diſſenters, who are the undoubted promoters of their own, and of the Church's ruin? I am not to be told, that the leaſt tartneſs againſt our Non-Conforming Teachers, is enough to give any man the name of a well-wiſher to the Romaniſts, if not of a down-right Papiſt, amongſt their favorers and followers. And therefore here I would crave ſo much Charity from my Reader, as not to fauſter any ſuch thoughts of me, and if for no other reaſon, yet for the ſake of the Letter annexed to the enſuing diſcourſe. And let me tell him this, that had it not been for the prevention of that calumny, I had not publiſhed it, and that becauſe I could not think it any ways worthy of the Preſs. Having thus craved ſo much Charity of the Reader, I ſhall readily admit his peruſal of the enſuing pages of this Book, and by that let him judge, whether or no I may deſerve it.

Pſalm 122. Verſe 6.

Pray for the Peace of Jeruſalem.

That the *Pſalms* of *David* were Pen'd at ſeveral times, and deſigned for ſeveral occaſions, is moſt unqueſtionably true. And let the condition of Chriſtians, either in their publick or private capacities, be almoſt what it will, they may eaſily find out ſome *Pſalm* very proper and ſeaſonable for their relief and comfort; and ſuitable enough to that their preſent condition. As men infeſted with ſeveral Diſeaſes and Diſtempers of Body, may find ſome Drugs and Medicines in the Apothecarys Shop, to Purge out thoſe different humors that do moſt infeſt their Bodies. So may Chriſtians find out ſome Portion of the *Pſalms* of *David*, that may Adminiſter ſome eaſe and comfort to them, under all or moſt of thoſe many troubles that are incident to Humane Life. And hence it is, as I ſuppoſe, that our Church hath ſo wiſely proportioned the *Pſalms* of *David*, that they may be read through once at leaſt in every Month of the year, by the conſtant frequenters and attenders of her Service, that ſo, by our frequent reading and obſerving the ſame, we might readily find out ſome *Pſalm*, either in the whole, or at leaſt in the greater part of it, applicable to that our preſent condition.

That this *Pſalm*, wherein my Text is, was Pen'd by Holy *David*, is agreed upon by moſt Expoſitors. And if you would know the time and occaſion of his Writing it, it is likewiſe concluded by moſt to have been compoſed by him at ſuch time, when the Ark of God was moſt happily reſtored, and brought back by him to *Jeruſalem*. If you look into the 2 *Sam.* 6. 2. you will there find, that the Ark of God was in the Houſe of *Abinadab* in *Gibeah*, a High place in the City *Baalah* of *Judah*; and from thence it was removed and carryed by *David* into the

Houſe of *Obed Edom* the *Gittite*, who received a Bleſſing from God, together with all his Houſhold, by reaſon of the preſence of it, v. 10. 11. of that Chapter. But as *Noah*'s Dove, when he ſent her out of the Ark, could find no reſting place for the ſole of her Feet, until the Waters were ſo abated that the dry ground appeared: So neither could the Ark of God find any reſt, either in the Houſe of *Abinadab* in *Gibeah*, or in the Houſe of *Obed Edom* the *Gittite*, or any where elſe, until it was brought into *Jeruſalem*, the City of *David*, and there placed. Thither it was at length brought by *Iſrael* with joy and great gladneſs, with ſhouting, and with the noiſe of a Trumpet, v. 15. of the ſame Chapter. And it is (as I told you before) the opinion of moſt Expoſitors, that *David* compoſed this *Pſalm*, and deliver'd it to be ſung at this ſolemnity. This was a time of gladneſs and great joy amongſt them; the people, at it's approach, do (as it were) unanimouſly run to bid it welcome. And it was no ſooner ſetled amongſt them, but they do as unanimouſly deſire to enter therein to pay their Thanks, and to perform their Devotions. They ſtay not to be invited thither by the Prophet, neither was there any need of his Exhortation to them to go, for they came on purpoſe to invite and exhort him to it. At which readineſs and willingneſs of theirs, the Holy Prophet was ſo well pleaſed, that he tells us, v. 1. of this *Pſalm*, that he was glad, *I was glad* (ſayes he) *when they ſaid unto me, let us go into the Houſe of the Lord.* And now that the Holy Prophet might not fear their wearineſs and inconſtancy in the performance of their Devotions, that he might not think that this their great zeal would prove like the Morning Dew, quickly ſcatter'd and ſoon gone; that he might be fully aſſured and perſwaded of their perſeverance and conſtancy in it, they preſently make this firm reſolution, v. 2. *Our feet ſhall ſtand in thy Gates, O* Jeruſalem. This indeed was a very good way to keep the Ark of Gods Covenant amongſt them, and to ſecure it from being again carried away Captive from them. For when any Nation or People do once begin to grow negligent and weary in the

the performance of Religious Duties, when once they become ſo backward and ſlack, as to be indifferent whether they come or not at all unto them: though they do not hear that very voice that was heard a little before the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, a voice (as ſome think) uttered by the Angels out of the Clouds, *abeamus hinc*, let us flit and be gone, yet may they very juſtly fear the dreadful effects and ſad conſequences of it; that God will depart, and that he will ſtay no longer with them; that he will take away his Word and his Goſpel, his Worſhip and his Service, (ſo much ſlighted and abuſed) and all ſenſe of Religion, and beſtow it upon a people that will bring forth the Fruits thereof. This the Holy Prophet very well underſtood, and therefore how greatly does he rejoyce to hear their reſolutions of being conſtant in their Devotions. He could never forget the miſeries and troubles, the fears and diſtractions they were conſtantly in, while the Ark of God was under Captivity. And therefore, ſeeing that it was now once again moſt happily reſtored and ſetled amongſt them, ſo that they might for ever after as happily enjoy the preſence of it; he puts them in mind, that in their Prayers and Devotions, they ſhould *Pray for the peace of* Jeruſalem, or that they ſhould put up their Petitions unto God, for the proſperity and ſafety of it.

The words of my Text then in the whole are (as you ſee) an Exhortation of Holy *David* to the people, to *Pray for the Peace of* Jeruſalem.

In which Exhortation you may obſerve theſe Three particulars.

Firſt, Here is a plain ſpecification of the thing for which he importunes their care, and that is *Jeruſalem*.

Secondly, Here is an indication of the action, by which they may evidence their love to it, and their care of it, and that is by Prayer. And

Thirdly, *ult.* Here is the Bleſſing which in their Prayers and Petitions they ſhould beg and requeſt of God for it, and that is peace. *Pray for the peace of* Jeruſalem.

Before I come to treat of any particular point, it will be needful to ſpeak briefly of a very great miſtake, that is crept into the minds of many ignorant people, in reference to duties of this nature. Some there are that will tell us, that becauſe there is mention made of *Jeruſalem*, and of the Ark of Gods covenant, and of a Temple and the like, being things long ſince demoliſhed and gone, that this Exhortation therefore is of no obligation at all unto them, that they are no ways concerned in it, and that it reached no further then juſt to thoſe to whom it was at firſt made. But the Apoſtle St. *Paul* hath told us, *that whatſoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning*, *Rom.* 15. 4. And again, in the 2. *Tim.* 3. 16. *That all Scripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and inſtruction in righteouſneſs.* So that although we are not concern'd as to the literal meaning of the words, yet as to the inward import of them, we are, and ſo far we may conclude, that whatſoever was thus ſpoken unto them was ſpoken unto us, alſo, even to all Chriſtian people that ever were before us, or that ſhall ever come after us, that they ſhould pray for the peace, and unity, and ſafety of the holy Catholick Church, even to the end of the World. There is no queſtion to be made (ſaid a Reverend Prelate and Martyr of our Church) but that the eye of the Prophet was ſo clear, that he look'd quite through the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, which was but a Figure or Shadow of that which was to come, and ſaw Chriſt, his Church and Kingdom at the end of it. So that this *Pſalm* hath a great reach, and it is of a very large extent; it reaches not only to the *Jew* but alſo to the Chriſtian, not only to the Temple, but alſo to the Church. So that we now, as well as they then, may and muſt and ought to *pray for the peace of our* Jeruſalem.

By *Jeruſalem* here is indeed meant, as well the State or body of the Kingdom, as the body of the Church. For after the Ark of God was placed there, it became not only the houſe of Religion or the Houſe of God, verſe the 1. But alſo the houſe of the State or Kingdom, becauſe there alſo is the Seat of Judgment,

ment, verſe the 5. And therefore it is our duty to pray for the peace of both, not only for the peace of the Church, but alſo for the peace of the Kingdom. But how rare a thing is it to meet with any, but what are ready, and willing enough to conſult the good of the State, and the peace and ſafety of the Kingdom, becauſe the eſtates and lively hood both of them and theirs, doth very much depend upon it. But alas! The thing which moſt men are moſt extreamly forgetful of, is the peace of the Church, they are but little concerned at the rents and breaches that are made in it; never conſidering that if the Church be diſquieted and diſturbed, the State or Kingdom can never be at peace.

The word here rendred, *pray*, is in the *Septuagint* Ἐρωτᾶτε, which ſignifies to ask and enquire after, to labor and endeavor the good of any thing. Some would have it read *quærite*, ſeek it and follow hard after it. And then the ſenſe of the exhortation, will be much agreable with that of the holy Apoſtle St. *Paul*, *Rom.* 14. 19. *Follow after, or moſt zealously attend to thoſe things, that make for the peace of* Jeruſalem *or the Church.* By the word, peace, is here meant all kind of bleſſings, all manner of proſperity. *Pacis nomen generaliter accipitur pro læto & fælici ſtatu* (ſayes *Mollerus* in his expoſition of this *Pſalm*) the word peace is generally taken for a joyful and moſt happy State, becauſe, this is that which Crowns all other bleſſings, and is above all others the moſt to be deſired by us.

And now having thus lay'd open to you the meaning of theſe three terms here uſed in the Text, and thereby ſhew'd you what is the import of praying for the peace of *Jeruſalem*, I ſhall lay down, and proſecute this following obſervation, which is altogether agreable with it (*viz.*)

Obſ. That it is a duty, highly concerning and much incumbent upon all Chriſtians, to endeavor the ſafety, and to pray for the peace of the Church. I might here give you a large diſcourſe of peace, and of the ſeveral benefits of it. I might ſhew you at large, that peace is abſolutely the greateſt temporal bleſſing,

that

that any people or nation can poſſibly partake of. It is a thing ſo good, that without it nothing can be good, with it (ſays *Solomon*) an handful of hearbs, without it an houſe full of Sacrifices is not good, *Pro.* 17. 1. Theſe things (which I ſhall anon lightly touch at) I might inſiſt upon at large, and thereby engage, and perſwade you all to this great and important duty, of praying for the peace of *Jeruſalem*, or for the proſperity and ſafety of the Church. But I queſtion not, but that I ſhall effectually engage you to it, and convince you all of the great neceſſity of endeavoring the ſafety, and of praying for the peace of the Church, from theſe following reaſons and conſiderations. As

1ſt, It will appear to be a duty highly concerning, and much incumbent upon all Chriſtians, to endeavor the ſafety, and to pray for the peace of the Church, becauſe of thoſe many enemies which continually lay ſiege againſt it, endeavoring to diſturb it's peace, and, as much as in them lyes, utterly to overthrow it. In the 16 Chap. of St. *Matthews* Goſpel and the 18. verſe. When our Saviour Chriſt (upon St. *Peters* acknowledgment, and confeſſion of his being the true *Meſſias*, and the ſon of the living God) told him, *thou art* Peter, *and upon this Rock* (i. e.) upon this confeſſion, which thou, whoſe name ſignifies a Rock or Stone, haſt made, *I will build my Church*; and withal made that promiſe, *that the Gates of Hell* (i.e.) all the power and ſtrength, wiſdom and policy, authority and empire in the world, no, not the grave or Satan himſelf, which proverbially are ſaid to be irreſiſtable, *ſhould ever prevail againſt it, or deſtroy it.* By this promiſe, I ſay, he does inſinuate and inform us thus much, that thoſe open Gates, and Gates of Hell, gape not wider for any thing than for it. Though the Ark of God was ſetled in *Jeruſalem*, and though the people (as you have heard) were ſo reſolvedly conſtant in the performance of their devotions; yet the holy Prophet knew, that the *Philiſtines*, thoſe enemies of God and of his Church, waited only for an opportunity of taking it again Captive: And therefore upon this account, or more eſpecially for this reaſon, *pray* (ſays he)

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for the peace of Jeruſalem. No ſooner had the Apoſtles planted the Chriſtian Church, but the Gnoſticks, the followers of *Simon Magus*, that firſt Prieſt of the Church, preſently ſowed their Tares of diſcord and diſſention in it, and raiſed up the unbelieving *Jews* in every City, and in every place, where they might be ſuffered for to come, to diſquiet and diſturb it. And hence were all thoſe pathetick exhortations laid down by the Apoſtles, in their ſeveral Epiſtles to the ſeveral Churches, of following the things that make for peace, of having peace amongſt themſelves, *of keeping the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace*, and the like. That they ſhould by no means, hearken to any of thoſe Sowers of diſcord and ſedition, though they made never ſo fair a ſhew, and ſpecious pretence of piety and holineſs. Who came indeed (according to our Saviour's prediction) in Sheeps cloathing, as the true Prophets of old uſed to do, thereby pretending the greateſt innocency and meekneſs that could be, but inwardly they are ravenous Wolves, they deſign nothing in the concluſion but devouring and rapacity. Saint *Paul*, at that viſitation of his Brethren held at *Miletum*, and recorded in the 20. Chap. of the *Acts* of the Apoſtles, after he had told them of his going up to *Jeruſalem*, and of the bonds and afflictions, which, by the teſtimony of the holy Ghoſt, in every City, ſhould attend him there; he commits to them the care of his flock, charges them to feed the Church of God, which he had purchaſed with his own blood, and to be the more careful and watchful over it, for this reaſon, becauſe that after his departure, grievous Wolves would enter in amongſt them, not ſparing the flock; and men would ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things to draw away Diſciples after them (*i. e.*) becauſe they would ſoon be ſolicited with falſe Teachers, ſeducing the faithful, and doing great miſchief amongſt them. The Chriſtian Church, by reaſon of that falſe Doctrine of *Simon Magus* and the Gnoſticks, which ſpread like leaven, or, like the Leproſie quickly overrun the whole body of the Church; and by reaſon of thoſe grievous perſecutions of it by the heathen Emperors, ſoon after the firſt plantation of it, may not unfitly be compared, to that Man-child of which the Woman Travelled, *Revel.* 12. 4. Which

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was ready to be devoured as ſoon as ever it was born. Had it not been for the extraordinary aſſiſtance of Divine Providence, the Church of Chriſt could never have been planted; and when it was planted, it could never have been preſerved, had not God himſelf moſt miraculouſly upheld it. For on the one hand, the heathen Emperors, *Nero* and *Domitian*, *Maxentius* and *Dioclesian*, and the reſt of thoſe that make up that *decuplum flagellum Dei*, that Ten-ſtringed Scourge of God, ſought to batter it down by violence, and to ſuppreſs it. And on the other hand, *Simon Magus* and his followers, by ſowing their Weeds and Tares ſought to choke it, or at leaſt, to ſtop the growth of that Vine planted by Gods own right hand, and by their ſecret workings to undermine it. The former, like the Wild Boar out of the Wood, ſought to root it up; the latter, like the little but cunning Foxes, ſought for to devour her Grapes. And therefore the Church of God, may again be very well compared to that houſe (in the parable) that was built upon the Rock, *Matth.* 7. 25. It has hitherto, and it ſhall for ever ſtand firm and unſhaken, *though the rain ſtill deſcends, the Floods come, and the winds do ſtill blow and beat upon it.* It's true indeed, the Church of God has ever ſince the time of *Conſtantine* the great, the firſt of all the Roman Emperors, that publickly owned and embraced Chriſtianity, enjoyed ſome halcyonian days, days of peace, and of ſome freedom from thoſe former bloody perſecutions. But ſtill the Devil hath other Inſtruments and Engines at work, either by violence to batter it down, or elſe by Hereſie, and Schiſm, and Diviſion, and other politick contrivances, ſecretly to undermine it. As Saint *Paul*, at his firſt being at *Athens*, was encountered by two different Sects of Philoſophers, the Stoicks on the one hand, and the Epicureans on the other: So is the Church of God at this time, moſt miſerably infeſted by two differing enemies, the Papiſts on the one hand, and the diſſenting Sectaries amongſt us on the other. And as it was heretofore, *Ephraim* againſt *Manaſſes*, and *Manaſſes* againſt *Ephraim*, but both againſt *Judah*; So the Papiſts make a great clamor and out-cry againſt our Sectaries, and our Sectaries cry out as eagerly

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ly againſt the Papiſts, when as they are both of them really and truely againſt the true Church of God. And by this means, alas! they do contribute too much towards the growth and encreaſe of each other, and indeed (as might eaſily be made out) to the growth and encreaſe of Atheiſm, and of all manner of wickedneſs and profaneneſs. So that for this reaſon, I ſay, it will appear to be a duty highly concerning, and much incumbent upon all Chriſtians, to endeavor the ſafety, and to pray for the peace of the Church, becauſe of thoſe many enemies, which continually lay ſeige againſt it, endeavoring to diſturb it's peace and utterly to overthrow it.

2ly. It will appear to be a duty highly concerning *&c.* becauſe the peace and ſafety of the State and Kingdom, does very much depend upon it. Here I may ask St. *James* his queſtion; whence come wars and fightings among you? Whence have all thoſe Wars and Broils and Bloody Maſſacres, which have happened within leſs then one Century of years, in ſeveral of our neighbor-nations, proceeded, but only from diverſity of opinion in Religion? Whence proceeded our own late civil, yet moſt uncivil and unnatural Wars, wherein ſome Hundreds of Thouſands loſt their lives, when Brother fought againſt Brother, Father againſt Son, and Son againſt Father, but only from the ſame diverſity of opinion in Religion, and about the Worſhip and Service of God? From whence ſprings, that inveterate and implacable malice of the Papiſts at this preſent, even to the endeavoring of the utter deſtruction of our King and Kingdom, but only from a (falſe) ſuppoſal of our being Hereticks in religion, and ſchiſmaticks in the Church? *Ut fratrum odia ſint acerrima, ſic eorum ferè qui conſortes aliquando ejuſdem religionis*, ſays the learned *Lypſius*: As the hatred of Brothers, if once they fall out, is the moſt inveterate and irreconcileable, ſo none do more envy and hate one another then perſons that have been, but now are not of the ſame opinion in matters of Religion. This indeed ought not to be, eſpecially amongſt Chriſtians, whoſe Religion enjoins them, not only to bear with one another, and to be ready to do all acts of kindneſs one for a-

 nother,

nother, but alſo to love their very enemies, to do good to them that hate them, and to pray for them that do deſpitefully uſe them. But alas! this is too too little obſerved; and the other (*viz.*) envy and hatred, deſpite and malice, evil ſpeaking and ſlandering, and the like, are the moſt uſual and ordinary effects and conſequences of difference in Religion. If you look but into the 9. Chap. of St. *Lukes* Goſpel, and compare it with the 4. Chap. of St. *Johns*, you will find all that I now ſpeak of to be true. The *Jews* and the *Samaritans*, were of a different opinion as to the place of Gods Worſhip. The one thought *Jeruſalem* to be the only place for it, the other Mount *Geriſin*. And therefore our Saviour Chriſt coming to a Village of the Samaritans, becauſe he did but ſeem to them to be going towards *Jeruſalem*, they would not ſo much as give him the leaſt kind reception, and entertainment amongſt them. Did any but ſeem to them to be *Jews*, or to be going towards *Jeruſalem*, they ſhall neither have meat, nor drink, nor lodging, they may ſtarve for any relief they are like to find from them. *How is it, that thou, being a* Jew, (*ſays the* Samaritan *woman to our Saviour Chriſt*) *askeſt drink of me, who am a Woman of* Samaria? *For the* Jews *have no dealings, no communication or familiarity with the* Samaritans. And as the *Samaritans* dealt thus unkindly with the *Jews*, meerly becauſe of their diſſenting from them in Religion; ſo the *Jews*, even *James* and *John*, two of our Saviour's immediate Diſciples and Attendants, ſhewed as great, or rather greater malice againſt the *Samaritans*, and that too upon the ſame account, becauſe of their diſſenting from them in matters of Religion: What! will they not give entertainment to the Saviour of the world, to the Lord of Life, and to the Prince of Glory? Let us call for fire to come down from Heaven to conſume them. Are they *Jews*? let them then ſtarve, ſays the one; are they *Samaritans*? Burn them, ſays the other. This is the fruit, and ſowre fruit indeed of diſſention in Religion; and this is the ſpirit, the Diabolical ſpirit indeed, it makes men commonly of. And now ye your ſelves ſhall judge, whether it's poſſible, for that State or Kingdom to continue long in peace and ſafety, where there is great

great difference in Religion. Certainly there can be but little peace, ſince it renders men thus malicious and inveterate one againſt another. If ſome of the Bells of *Aaron* be rung backwards, and made to jangle, it portends no leſs then a combuſtion in the Kingdom. *Turbata religio politiam turbat*, is another ſaying of the learned *Lypſius*; a ſaying which I am confident the Papiſts make great reckoning of; do but divide them in their opinions about Religion, and then the Kingdom muſt needs fall into diſorder and confuſion. If there be no peace in the Church, there is but little to be hoped for in the State. And therefore for this reaſon alſo, it will highly concern us all, to endeavor the ſafety, and to pray for the peace of the Church, becauſe the peace and ſafety of the State or Kingdom doth very much depend upon it. Again

3ly and *ult.* It will appear to be a duty highly concerning, and much incumbent upon &c. becauſe of the bleſſed and happy effects and fruits of it. Had we but peace and unity and an amicable agreement amongſt our ſelves, we need not then ſo much fear all the cunningſt plots of the Jeſuits, that are hatched in the conclave of *Rome*, and acted by their Emiſſaries here; who, as our Saviour Chriſt ſays of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, do compaſs Sea and Land to make a *Proſelite*, and afterwards make him ſeven fold more the Child of the Devil than he was before. And as we need not then fear the Plots of the Jeſuits, had we but unity amongſt our ſelves; ſo ſhould we moſt readily and willingly, and without the leaſt compulſion and conſtraint, lay aſide all private meetings and unlawful aſſemblies. We ſhould all go to the houſe of God as friends, *Pſal.* 55. 5. and meet as the Apoſtles did at the deſcent of the holy Ghoſt upon them, *Acts* 2. with one accord in one place. Behold, how good and pleaſant a thing it is (ſays holy *David*) *Brethren to dwell together in unity!* Certainly, were but the bleſſed effects of peace, and the pleaſant fruits of unity, once taſted, and throughly reliſhed by us, it would prove effectual to the provoking of all men, to lay aſide all thoſe little picks and quarrels, and indeed moſt unreaſonable complaints, which they make againſt our Church, and to unite againſt that common

enemy, who ſo vigorouſly endeavors the ruin of it, but knows withal that there is no ſpeedier way, whereby this can poſſibly be effected, then by fomenting thoſe little differences that are amongſt us, and by blowing up thoſe little ſparks into a flame, which we alas! of our ſelves are too too apt to kindle. As the concurrence of multitude of Hereſies, and mutability in Religion (as a late Learned and judicious writer obſerves) was a means to bring in Antichriſt; ſo the preſent differences and animoſities amongſt our ſelves, fomented by the Factors of *Rome*, will have no ſmall tendency to bring back the infallible Chair. For people (as he very well goes on to prove it) will accept of a quiet harbor, though upon hard conditions, rather then be afflicted with continual toſſings in Stormy Seas. 'Tis natural to man to covet any quiet Land, rather then to dwell with the terror of a continual Earth-Quake. How mightily that party hath encreaſed upon us of late years, I think I need not, becauſe the former and the very late endeavors of the higher powers to ſuppreſs them, do ſufficiently tell us. And from whence, the encreaſe of that party doth undoubtedly proceed, I have (according to the judgment of all our late writers) now ſhew'd you. And if God Almighty ſhould again ſuffer that common enemy, to enter in at the breaches we have made amongſt our ſelves (as a juſt and deſerved puniſhment upon us for it) then (to uſe the words of the Learned Doctor *Stillingfleet*,) ſhould we begin to wiſh, that we had ſooner known the difference, between the reaſonable commands of our own Church, and the intollerable Tyranny of a forreign and uſurped power, between the ſoft and gentle hands of a mother, and the iron ſinews of an Executioner, betwixt the utmoſt rigor of our Laws, and the leaſt and mildeſt of an inquiſition. None can ever be ſufficiently ſenſible of the bleſſed effects of the peace of the Church, as thoſe that are deprived of it. Peace indeed is better known by want than uſe, and is thought moſt worthy the having by them, who have it not. Let but your fancy therefore lead you for a while, from the conſideration of your own preſent peace, into ſome Kingdom rouling in Blood, and into ſome Church infeſted

feſted with Perſecution. Ask them who are divided by the Sword, which are roſting at the flames, torturing upon the Rack; ſuch as the Apoſtle St. *Paul* ſpeaks of in the 11. Chap. of his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, *As are forced to wander about, in Sheep-skins and goat-skins, to hide themſelves in Dens and Caves of the Earth, being deſtitute, afflicted and tormented.* Ask ſuch as thoſe, I ſay, what a bleſſed and happy a State it is, to live in the Fellowſhip and Communion of ſuch a Church as ours is, wherein the word of God is truly and ſincerely, not raſhly and unpremeditately Preached, the Sacraments rightly and duly, and not irreverently given and received, where there is nothing enjoyned or commanded, but what is altogether agreeable with the preſcribed rule, and canon of holy Scripture. If you ſhould ask them this queſtion, I am perſwaded, that they would be ready to return you an anſwer in thoſe words of holy *David*, *Pſalm.* 144. 15. *Happy are the People that are in ſuch a caſe*; or elſe in thoſe words of our Saviour Chriſt, *Luke* 19. 42. *That you did but know in this your day, the things that do belong unto your peace before it be too late, before they are hid from your eyes.* And thus you ſee the ſeveral reaſons, why it doth ſo highly concern us all to endeavor the ſafety, and to pray for the peace of the Church. 1. becauſe of thoſe many enemies, which lay ſeige againſt it, endeavoring to diſturb it's peace and utterly to overthrow it. 2ly. becauſe the peace and ſafety of the State and Kingdom doth very much depend upon it. And laſtly, becauſe of the bleſſed effects and happy fruits of peace.

Let us now ſee what uſes may be made of this point.

Uſe 1. Firſt then, Is it ſo that it is a duty of ſo great concernment to us all, to endeavor the ſafety and to pray for the peace of the Church? How cautious and careful ſhould we all then be, in avoiding all ſuch who endeavor to break the peace of it, and to ſow diviſion and diſſention in it? Look upon that exhortation of the Apoſtle St. *Paul*, which I ſhall make uſe of at this time unto you all, in the 16. Chap. of his Epiſtle to the *Romans* and the 17. verſe, *I beſeech you, Brethren, mark them which cauſe diviſions and offences, contrary to the Doctrine ye have learned, and avoid them.*

For

For verſe the 18. *They that are ſuch, ſerve not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but their own belly, and by good words and fair ſpeeches deceive the hearts of the ſimple.* And much like unto this, is, that warning given us by our Saviour Chriſt, *Matth.* 7. 15. *Beware of falſe Prophets, which come to you in Sheeps-clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves; ye ſhall know them by their fruits,* (i. e.) if you do but obſerve and weigh the Doctrines, which they will endeavor to infuſe into you (not ſuddenly but by degrees, and as ſoon as ever they are got into ſome power and authority with you) you may eaſily diſcover what they are. If they endeavor to infuſe into you, higher degrees of all kind of piety towards God, and charity towards your neighbor, you may then reſolve that they are ſent from God; but if their deſign be to infuſe into their followers any ſeeds of impiety, injuſtice, uncleanneſs, uncharitableneſs, ſedition, rebellion, diſobedience to Governors, and the like, be ſure then that they are falſe Prophets, ſuch as ſeek to diſturb the peace of the Church, and to embroil the Kingdom in trouble. And therefore beware of ſuch as theſe, and avoid them. And let us not only avoid them, but alſo pray againſt them, as againſt thoſe that have evil will at our *Sion,* that they may never ſucceed, or proſper in their intended deſign of breaking and diſturbing *the peace of our* Jeruſalem.

2. Secondly, A ſecond uſe which we may make of this point may be this, is it ſo, that it is a duty ſo highly concerning, and incumbent upon all Chriſtians, to endeavor the ſafety and to pray for the peace of the Church? How juſtly blameable then, nay? how wretchedly ſinful is it in any to be diſturbers of it's Peace and Unity, and to make it their main buſineſs, to make the rents and breaches of it wider? This Church of ours (like the poor Traveller, in the Parable, that was going down from *Jeruſalem* to *Jerico*) hath had the hard fortune, to fall amongſt mercileſs Thieves and Robbers, who have not only ſtript her of her Raiment, and left her too naked, but they have wounded her too, and left her (in a manner) half dead. And too many there are, who, though profeſſedly her ſons, are yet ſo indifferent, and cool in their affe-

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ctions towards her, that (like the *Prieſt* and the *Levite*) if they happen to Travel that way where ſhe lyes, they may perchance vouchſafe to caſt a look at her, but then they preſently paſs by on the other ſide. Though theſe can never be reckon'd amongſt her friends; for can any man perſwade me, that that perſon is my friend, who when he either ſees or hears me groſly wronged and abuſed, will only ſtand and look on, as altogether unconcerned for me? So that, I ſay, although theſe perſons can never be reckon'd amongſt her friends, yet they are not her worſt enemies neither, for others there are that are far more unmerciful to her ſtill, who inſtead of having compaſſion on her, inſtead of coming to her (like the good *Samaritan* in the forenamed parable) to bind up her wounds, and to pour in Oyle and Wine, the moſt healing and comfortable Medicines, ſeek rather for ſalt and vinegar, the moſt corroding and fretting ingredients, and all on purpoſe to keep the wound ſtill open, and to make the cure the harder. That there are too too many ſuch amongſt us, we find by ſad and woful experience. But would to God, that not only thoſe, who paſs her by ſo unconcerned and indifferent, would conſider how unacceptable and unpleaſing ſuch a luke-warm, treacherous temper is to God, and whether this be any better then to be aſhamed of him before men; but alſo thoſe, and thoſe eſpecially, who do thus endeavor to keep open at leaſt, if not to widen her differences alſo, would timely conſider, not only the manifeſt folly, but alſo the extream ſinfulneſs and the inexcuſable impiety of it. As for the folly of it, that has been already evinced, in that they make way by theſe breaches, for the common enemy to enter in amongſt us, whom yet they ſeem the moſt zealouſly to hate and fear. And then as for the ſinfulneſs of it, there is nothing ſure that can more eaſily be made appear. For if our Saviour Chriſt hath promiſed the greateſt bleſſing to thoſe that are Peace-makers, even to be called the ſons of God, ſurely then we may from hence moſt reaſonably infer and conclude, that no leſs then the greateſt puniſhment and curſe, ſhall be the reward and portion of all ſuch, as do promote and encourage diſcord and diſſention; And ſure I am, that

there

there is no puniſhment for any thing but what is ſinful. But in regard, this is a thing which many men are not ſo fully convinced of, or at leaſt, do not ſo well conſider, as they ſhould and ought, I ſhall beg leave to enlarge a little further upon it. That this ſin of dividing the Church, is a ſin of a very deep dye, and of no little guilt cannot well be doubted by any man. For why ſhould our Saviour Chriſt have taken ſo much care to prevent it, had it been but a ſmall matter? Why ſhould he have took ſo much pains (as he did) with his Apoſtles, to inſtruct them throughly, that ſo they might not diſagree or thwart one another in any thing, when they ſhould come to deliver his mind unto the world, if it had not been of a dangerous and ſinful conſequence for them, to have fallen out, and to have divided one from another? He that conſiders, how ardently he prayed for them, not long before he left the world, that they might be at Unity and Peace amongſt themſelves, will never doubt but that it had been ſinful, and dangerous for them to have jarr'd and fal'n out, *John* 17. 11. *Holy Father, keep through thine own name, thoſe whom thou haſt given me, that they may be one, as we are.* And as our Saviour Chriſt uſed the greateſt care, ſo the Apoſtles after him ſhewed no leſs diligence and circumſpection to prevent it. They were earneſtly induſtrious, to ſtop all beginnings of Schiſm in the Church, to heal all breaches, and to take away all occaſion of Diviſion from amongſt their Diſciples and followers. When the Apoſtle St. *Paul* heard of the diviſions that were riſen in the Church of *Corinth*, he ſends a very ſharp reproof for it. Now in this that I declare unto you, I praiſe you not (*i.e.*) I very much blame and reprove you for it; for the phraſe there uſed is a *Meioſis*, and hath more in the meaning then is expreſſed. And what is that which he ſo highly reproved them for? Why it is for this, when ye come together in the Church, I hear that there be diviſions among you, 1. *Cor.* 11. 18. And if the Apoſtles were thus careful and circumſpect to prevent it, and ſo ſharply reproved thoſe that were guilty of it; we can never imagine, but that they looked upon thoſe as very ill men, who fomented a Schiſm and Diviſion in the

the Church. But this is not all neither. Let us conſider a little further, what odious names and appellations they have beſtowed upon ſchiſm and diviſion. They call it carnality, they call it the work of the Fleſh, nay! They call it the very work of the Devil. Whereas there is among you envying, and ſtrife, and diviſions, are ye not carnal? 1. *Cor.* 3. 3. And again verſe 4. *while one ſaith, I am of* Paul, *and another, I am of* Apollos, *are ye not carnal?* And if that rule be true, *noſcitur ex ſocio* ---- we may nearly gueſs what a man is, by the company he uſually keeps; then we may alſo gueſs of the evil of this ſin, of cauſing variance and ſeditions, by thoſe, and thoſe no *Peccadillos*, with which the Apoſtle hath conjoyned them. *Now the works of the fleſh* (ſays St *Paul*) *are manifeſt, which are theſe, Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, Laſciviouſneſs, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Hereſies*, and ſo on, in the 5. Chap. of his Epiſtle to the *Galathians* 19. 20. verſes. And then verſe the 21. he tells us what will be the puniſhment of this ſin, of cauſing variance and ſeditions, as well as of the reſt, no leſs then an utter deprivation of the Kingdom of Heaven; of the which (ſays he) I tell you, as I have alſo told you in time paſt, that they which do ſuch things ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God. One of the main things which we lay to the charge of the Church of *Rome*, and of which I do verily believe they are guilty, is Idolatry. But I would to God, that all that lay that ſin to their charge, would conſider, that this ſin of making a ſchiſm and diviſions in the Church, is reckon'd up by the Apoſtle in the ſame Catalogue. And therefore though they may not receive that puniſhment, of not inheriting the Kingdom of God, as Idolaters, yet as Schiſmaticks and dividers of the Church, they may. And ſo to, though they renounce all communion and fellowſhip with them here, yet they cannot fail, if they perſiſt in it, of being made their companions in that pit of darkneſs hereafter: Though they ſeem to hate and abhorr one another ſo much, as to grate their teeth one againſt another in deſpite and anger; yet let them take heed, that they meet not one another in thoſe Everlaſting Burnings, where

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they ſhall weep and wail, and gnaſh their teeth too; the one for his Idolatry, the other for fomenting ſchiſm and diviſion in the Church. Thus we ſee what an ill Character the Writings of holy men, that were inſpired from above, have given us of ſchiſm. And if we ſhould trace the ſenſe of the Church a little further, we ſhould find that the primitive Fathers, held this ſin in no leſs abhorrence and deteſtation, and that they thought it equal with the moſt notorious ſins, even ſuch as were reckon'd up by the Apoſtle forenamed. But I ſhall forbear, and only remember you how evident and apparent it is, that to make a Schiſm in the Church of God, and to promote and encourage diviſions in it, is a ſin of a very deep dye; which appears both from our Saviour's care, and the diligence and circumſpection of the Apoſtles to prevent it; from the odious names and appellations they have beſtowed upon it, and the puniſhment which they have threatned for it. And therefore we may (with the greateſt ſeriouſneſs) ſay unto thoſe who do promote and encourage diviſion, and do all they can to widen the differences in the Church, to thoſe we may ſay, as St. *Paul* and *Barnabas* ſaid to the men of *Lyſtra* in another caſe, *Acts* 14. 15. *Sirs? why do you theſe things?* why will ye thus make, and ſtill foment and carry on a ſchiſm and diviſion in the Church? But here they think to wipe of all that is thus ſaid againſt them, by telling us that their departure or ſeparation from our Church, is altogether involuntary, and that they cannot hold communion with us without ſin; ſo that, when we ſay to them, why do ye theſe things? They are preſently ready to reply, in thoſe words of *David* to *Eliab*, 1. *Sam.* 17. 29. *What have we done?* What evil is there in what we do? Is there not a cauſe? Have we not ſufficient reaſon for it? Here therefore we have an occaſion given, to examine their pleas and pretences for their ſeparation, and to ſee, if they can in the leaſt juſtifie or excuſe themſelves in it. I ſhall not waſt ſo much time, or, trouble your patience ſo far, as to ſpeak particularly, to every little exception they make againſt our Church, for they are generally ſo weak and ſenſeleſs, that they themſelves are become almoſt aſhamed to

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inſiſt any longer upon them. I ſhall therefore paſs all ſuch by, I ſhall not ſtay ſo long as to tyth their mint and cummin, for it will ſcarce be worth the while; but come directly to the weightier matters, which (they themſelves ſay) they have to object againſt us. And becauſe they are ſo well known to take all occaſions and opportunities, to infuſe ſuch things into the heads of their Diſciples and followers, not only in their meetings and conventicles; but to creep into private families, and to infect them alſo; it will be more neceſſary to ſpeak ſomewhat to them, by way of prevention to ſuch as are not yet infected, and by way of cure (if poſſible) to ſuch as are.

The very ſtrength of all their objections againſt our Church, and their greateſt pleas for their ſeparating and dividing from it, may briefly be drawn up under two heads, which I ſhall firſt lay down, and then return as brief an anſwer as the ſubject is capable of.

Firſt, they ſay, that this Church doth too nearly comply with the Church of *Rome*, and is not wholly cleanſed from it's ſuperſtitions. And

Secondly, that this Church commands and enjoins thoſe ceremonies in it's worſhip and ſervice, which are no where commanded by God, and therefore it is meerly will worſhip, which is condemned by the Apoſtle, and therefore cannot be comply'd with without ſin.

Firſt then, they ſay, that this Church doth too nearly comply with the Church of *Rome*, and is not wholly cleanſed from it's ſuperſtitions. The charge indeed is great, and were it as true, as it is utterly falſe and malicious, it would not only juſtifie their ſeparation from it, but alſo moſt juſtly exaſperate the minds of all men againſt it. But it is moſt certain that all is not popery, that is in uſe and practice in the Roman Church; and if we ſhould once reſolve, to follow nothing that is uſed and practiſed there, we muſt then reſolve not only to forbear to ſay our prayers, and to lift up our eyes to Heaven, but alſo to lay aſide the very profeſſion of Chriſtianity its ſelf, as (I remember I have read) that Renowned and Learned Prince, King *James*, long ſince obſerved

ſomewhat to this purpoſe. And therefore ſo long as there are no other things uſed in our Church, but ſuch as were generally received by all Chriſtian Churches, and by the Romane too, but long before ſhe left her firſt love, and ſo became vitiated and corrupted; this charge of Popery is very unjuſt and utterly unreaſonable. But not to dwell overlong in anſwering this objection; let but any perſon ſeriouſly conſider theſe two things, and then he will moſt readily acquit her from this charge, and ſave both my ſelf and all others any further trouble. 1ſt. Let him conſider, that if this Church were any ways affianced to that of *Rome*, I mean as to any thing that is truely ſuperſtitious and ſinful, certainly there had not been a man of all thoſe pious, Learned and conſcientious Divines, in Queen *Mary*'s days, that would have Sacrificed their eſtates and lives, in teſtimony of the purity and uncorruptneſs of it. The Devil, though he was a lyar from the beginning, yet in this he ſpake truth, *skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life*, *Job.* 2. 4. And the Apoſtle St. *Paul*, ſpeaking of the extraordinary love of Chriſt, in laying down his life for us ſinners, tells us, *Rom.* 5. 7. *That ſcarcely for a righteous man will one dye, yet peradventure for a good man ſome would even dare to dye*, intimating thereby that none will go ſo far, as to lay down their lives, for any thing but what they are ſtrongly opinionated to be good and holy. If therefore this Church, in it's firſt reformation, and from whence ſhe hath never deviated, ſave only in ſome few things, in meer condeſcention to our weak Brethren, and I hope they will eaſily forgive her that wrong; I ſay, if this Church had then retained any thing ſinful, Surely we can never imagine that *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, and *Latimer*, and divers others ſhould have been ſo prodigal of their blood, as to pour it out in teſtimony of the goodneſs and purity of it. To ſay that we have greater light now, and that we do eſpy thoſe deformities in it, which they, at that time, were not aware of, is to charge thoſe holy men with ignorance and blindneſs (which is but an ill requital) who were as quickſighted, as holy and conſcientious as any of our greateſt zealots and pretenders now. But

Second-

Secondly, if there be any perſon that entertains any ſuch ſuſpition of our Church, as that it complyes too nearly with that of *Rome*, let him tell me, in the next place, why thoſe of the Romiſh Church ſhould not only withdraw themſelves from ours, as any one that doth not wilfully ſhut his eyes may plainly ſee they do, but alſo bear the moſt implacable ſpite and ſpleen againſt it; greater indeed, far greater, then againſt any ſect or party whatſoever. *If ye were of the world* (ſays our Saviour Chriſt to his Diſciples) *the world would love his own, but becauſe ye are not of the world, but I have choſen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you, John* 15. 19. And ſo may we argue much after the ſame manner here, if this Church was any ways of the Church of *Rome*, the Church of *Rome* would rather love then hate it, but becauſe this Church is not of the Church of *Rome*, therefore doth the Church of *Rome* ſo greatly hate it. This very conſideration, I ſay, together with the former, will moſt clearly vindicate and acquit it, in the judgment of every honeſt and unprejudiced perſon, from that firſt objection which is ſo commonly made againſt it, (*viz*) it's too near complyance with the Church of *Rome*, and it's ſuperſtitions. Again

Secondly, their ſecond objection is this, That this Church commands, and enjoyns thoſe ceremonies in her worſhip and ſervice, which are no where commanded by God, and therefore it is meerly will-worſhip, which is condemned by the Apoſtle, and cannot be comply'd with without ſin.

Before I can return any anſwer to this objection, I muſt take it in pieces, and ſhew what it is we own, and what we utterly diſown and deny. That this Church doth enjoyn ſome ceremonies in her ſervice, which God hath no where particularly and preciſely commanded, that we own, but that ſhe is therefore guilty of that will-worſhip, which is condemned by the Apoſtle, that we deny. But why, I wonder, ſhould they lay ſo great ſtreſs upon this objection, as they commonly do? What can be more eaſily anſwered? What though God hath not particularly and preciſely commanded ſuch ceremonies? What is all this to their purpoſe,

ſince

ſince he hath commanded by his Apoſtle, in the 1. *Cor.* 14. *ult. That all things ſhould be done decently and in order?* And therefore ſo long as the Church enjoynes, no other then ſuch as tend meerly to the preſervation of decency and order, What fault can any man juſtly find with her for it? It is altogether impoſſible to perform any worſhip to God without ſome ceremonies. He that goes to his devotions, though but in his cloſet, muſt uſe the ceremony either of ſitting, or ſtanding, or kneeling; and one of theſe is as much a ceremony as the other. He that ſtands as ſtiff as the Phariſee is as ceremonious, as he that kneels with the Apoſtle, or, lyes proſtrate with our Saviour. And therefore theſe perſons that exclaim ſo much, againſt a ceremony muſt needs be αὐτοκατακρίτοι, not only accuſers but condemners of themſelves too, if ever they ſay their prayers. Seing therefore that the worſhip of God cannot be performed without ſome ceremonies, and ſince any of them is in itſelf as lawful as the other, the ſuperior ſurely may appoint, which he in reaſon and conſcience thinks moſt fitting, and in ſo doing he commands nothing unlawful; And he that doth diſobey any of theſe things, after it is ſo commanded and appointed, can never excuſe himſelf from that ſin of diſobedience to Governors. And if he be puniſhed for it, he hath no reaſon to think that he ſuffers for doing well, for he is but buffeted for his faults, and what glory is it (ſays the Apoſtle) though he takes it patiently? 1. *Pet.* 2. 20. But to make ſhort of the buſineſs; Let us but take the ſame courſe with theſe people as *Nathan* did with *David*, 2. *Sam.* 12. or, as our Saviour did with the *Prieſts* and *Elders*, in the 21. Chap. of St. *Matth.* Goſpel (*i.e.*) Let us but ſtate the caſe to them under a diſguiſe, and I am perſwaded, that they will readily enough acquit their governors from all faults, in enjoyning ſome harmleſs and indifferent ceremonies, and condemn themſelves for not obeying the ſame. Let us (when ever opportunity ſerves) put the caſe thus unto them. Suppoſe that you, that are maſters of families, ſhould command your children and houſhold, to appear before you at ſuch a time, and at ſuch a place, and there to joyn with you to worſhip God in ſuch a poſture, and by the uſe of

ſuch

ſuch a prayer, which you have compoſed in conſideration of their weakneſs, and that they might all ſpeak the ſame things. This you have given ſufficient notice of, and none can pretend ignorance of it. Suppoſe now that ſome of them ſhould come and tell you, that you exceed your bounds, that you take too much upon you, in reſtraining them thus of their liberty, and in tying them up ſo ſtrictly to the uſe of ſuch things, as God has no where commanded, but hath left them altogether free. Suppoſe one, that is a little more ſawcy and confident than the reſt, ſhould venture to tell you, that if you intend to have his company at your prayers, they ſhall then be at ſuch an hour, and not at that time which you have appointed. A ſecond, encourag'd by the example of the other, tells you that your Prayers ſhall be in ſuch a Room, and not where you have ordered. Another comes and asks you, what you have to do to appoint the poſture or the habit, in which their Prayers ſhall be performed; he is reſolv'd to come in what dreſs he pleaſes, and there either to ſit, or ſtand, or loll at his pleaſure; not ſo much for his eaſe, as meerly to croſs you, and to ſhew that he will not do, as you order and preſcribe. What, I pray, would you now think of theſe people? What would you, their Maſters and Governors, do to ſuch ſervants? Would you think that you your ſelves had done any thing amiſs herein, or that you had done more then you could juſtifie, and ſo beg their pardon; or, would you not rather look upon them as a company of unmannerly ſervants, would you not handle them a little ruffly for ſuch ſaucineſs, and put them out of your houſes, as perſons unfit to live in any civiliſed families? ſure enough they would. And then we may preſently come upon them with a, ye are the men; you are theſe very ſawcy, refractory ſervants. For a kingdom is but a larger family, over which the Prince is the Governor and maſter. And therefore when he hath by his Laws enjoyned ſuch and ſuch ceremonies, as are no ways contrary to the commands of God, you that diſobey your Prince in theſe things, do juſtifie your own children and ſervants in their diſobedience to your ſelves. But come, and let us reaſon together a little further;

why

why may not Chriſtian Kings uſe the ſame authority, as the Kings of *Iſrael* and *Judah* did? Produce your cauſe, bring forth your ſtrongeſt reaſons. Shew us when and where, and how they loſt ſuch authority. This ſeems to be no leſs a right then what is founded in nature, and approved of by God himſelf. Abraham *ſhall become a great and mighty Nation* (ſays God) *and then it follows, I know that he will command his children and his houſhold after him, to keep the way of the Lord, Gen.* 18. 18. 19. There is nothing more plain, then that the Governors and Princes of *Judah* did exerciſe ſuch power, and that it did of right belong unto them. And this is a thing that hath been often proved beyond all contradiction; eſpecially in a late piece called, the modern pleas for comprehenſion, toleration *&c.* To which I ſhall refer my reader. Thus you ſee, that this objection againſt our Church, of enjoyning ſome ceremonies, which are no where particularly and preciſely commanded by God, is of no validity at all. And that in regard the worſhip of God cannot be performed without ſome ceremonie, and who ſo fit (in order to the avoiding of confuſion) to determine in this caſe as our Governors, to whom God hath enjoyned obedience, and told us that we muſt ſubmit to every ordinance of man for his ſake? In regard, the Church doth no more then what every Maſter of a family doth expect, from his children and ſervants. And in regard too, that it is no more then what hath been done by Kings and Princes in the Old Teſtament. And I am ſure, that they can never prove, that they have been diveſted of this power in the new. And that we may not paſs the leaſt part of the objection unanſwered, I ſhall, in a few words, ſhew you, that this is not that will-worſhip which is condemned by St. *Paul*, and therefore they cannot have the leaſt ſhadow of reaſon, to ſeparate from our Church upon this account, and ſo diſturb *the peace of our* Jeruſalem. If you look into the 2. Chap. of St. *Pauls* Epiſtle to the *Coloſ.* you will find, verſe 18. That the Apoſtle forbids the worſhipping of Angels, as a bold invention of men, for which there was no revelation. From thence he proceeds to ſpeak againſt ſuch ſuperſtitious people, as did forbid

bid marriage, and the eating of ſome ſorts of meat, as in themſelves utterly unlawful. And thoſe that were of this humor, he directly charges (verſe 23) with will-worſhip. So that it is very plain, that thoſe perſons whom he charges with will-worſhip, are ſuch as do enjoyn or command any thing to be done or not done, as if it were the will and command of God, he ſhould be ſo ſerved, when it is but a meer conſtitution of the will of man, and enjoyned for ſome prudent conſiderations. Now all the world muſt needs acquit our Church from this, when ſhe hath plainly declared (as it is in the preface to the Common Prayer-Book) that none of theſe ceremonies are impoſed, under the notion of neceſſary or religious, but are of an indifferent nature, and only uſed, as decent and comely in the judgment of the preſent Governors, who may alter theſe things, and conſtitute others in their ſtead when they ſee fit, which they could not do, did they look upon them as things in themſelves neceſſary. And thus have we fully anſwered the main objections, which are commonly made againſt our Church; and ſhewed, that it hath no affiance at all with the Church of *Rome*, in any thing that is ſinful. And that the enjoyning ſome ceremonies, which God hath not particularly and preciſely commanded, is not that will-worſhip which is condemned by the Apoſtle; and therefore we may reaſſume what we did at firſt lay down, and ſay, that to ſeparate and divide from this Church, upon ſuch accounts, is highly blameable in any, nay! Extreamly ſinful.

But what, if after all this, we ſhould undertake to ſhew that theſe are but meer pretences, and that the great maintainers of a ſeparation from our Church, have not really any ſuch thoughts of her; but yet, leaſt the people ſhould ſuſpect their ſeparation from her to be cauſeleſs, they are willing that they ſhould think ſo of her. Alas! how commonly hath the world been deluded by ſpecious pretences? When *Mary* anointed our Saviours feet with a pound of Spikenard, which (ſays the Text) was very coſtly; *Judas* cryes out of a waſt, tells them that the Ointment might have been ſold for an hundred pence, and given to the poor. Here

indeed was a fair pretence (*viz*) charity to the Poor. But St. *John* the Evangeliſt tells us, that this was but a meer out-ſide, a meer pretence, and that covetouſneſs was the true cauſe of his muttering againſt it; *for this he ſaid* (ſays St. *John*) *not that he cared for the poor; but becauſe he was a Thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein, John* 12. 6. And ſo too, we have a great deal of reaſon to think, that the real cauſes of the ſeparation from our Church, and of the clamor that is made againſt it, are quite otherwiſe then what is commonly pretended. It will be worth a while therefore, to ſearch a little into the true cauſes of our diviſions, becauſe we ſhall thereby diſcover the true images of things, through thoſe dark miſts, which cunning but ungodly men, have endeavored to caſt before the eyes of the vulgar; we ſhall hereby diſcern how ſadly the ignorant, but well-meaning, vulgar, are deluded with meer pretences, and that while their teachers cry, conſcience, conſcience; it is meerly their own luſts that promote and carry on diviſions in the Church.

But becauſe thoſe that ſeparate and divide from our Church, are commonly diſtinguiſhed into a two-fold rank and order, the teaching and leading men, and the ſilly and deluded vulgar; we ſhall therefore reckon up the cauſes under a two-fold head, and ſhew, that ſome of them are to be appropriated to the one, and ſome to the other. And leaſt thoſe leading men, who think themſelves ſome body in their own conceit, ſhould take it in great dudgen, if they ſhould be put off to the laſt, and that we may not offend them in this, we ſhall therefore ſpeak to them in the firſt place.

1. Firſt then, the firſt cauſe or reaſon of theſe perſons ſeparating from the Church, and conſequently diſturbing the peace and unity of it, may be an ambitious and aſpiring ſpirit: There is no queſtion to be made, but that there have been, and are ſtill many ſuch men in the world, who, viewing themſelves in a falſe glaſs, do (*Pigmalion* like) fall in love with their own parts; and from an overweening conceit of them, they will not only adore them

them themſelves, but expect that all the world ſhould adore them too; and thoſe that do not ſee as much in them as they do in themſelves, they conclude that all ſuch are blinded by emulation and envy. From this over-weaning conceit of themſelves comes a fancy, that none are ſo worthily deſerving of the more honorable places in the Church, as they. And when they come to make ſuit and claim for ſuch places, if they happen to be put by, and others (perhaps more deſerving) to be preferred before them. This very thing ſhall preſently put them into a rage, they will forthwith bethink themſelves of a revenge, they will hereupon ſtudy, how to make themſelves conſiderable at the coſt of thoſe, who, they judged, did conſider them too little. And hereupon they will contrive ſome fair pretence to draw a party after them, and make a faction. Thus we are told, how that *Arrius* miſſing of a prelation to the order and dignity of a Biſhop (*Alexander* being preferr'd before him) he broatch'd, and troubled the Church with an heretical opinion, whereby he denyed the Divinity of our Saviour Chriſt. And ſome conceive, that the occaſion of *Tertullian's* defection from the true Faith, and of his fall to *Montaniſm* was, becauſe that after the death of *Agrippinus*, he ſufferr'd a repulſe, aud was put by the Biſhoprick of *Carthage*. I could produce divers inſtances of the like kind, were it at all needful. But it is much to be thought, that our preſent age will afford too many; that it would turn us out too many perſons, who have choſe to ſet up a party againſt the Church, and to be leaders of a faction, meerly becauſe they might not be Governors of it, and could not ſatisfie or content themſelves with what their Governors thought them deſerving. But what a ſad thing is it, and how unchriſtian too, for men (who pretend to be holyer and more conſcientious then others) to abuſe and delude the world ſo groſly, as to pretend that their ſeparating from the Church, is upon the account of conſcience; when it is meerly from an overweaning conceit of their abilities, that they are wiſer and better then others, and will therefore diſturb the peace of the Church, If they are not preferred before others. Is this humor in the leaſt

anſwerable to our Saviours Command, of Learning of him, who was lowly in heart? *Matth.* 11. 29. Or doth it any ways anſwer his Apoſtles charge, that in lowlineſs of mind we eſteem others better then our ſelves? *Phillip.* 2. 3. Certainly had they not quite laid aſide, and forgotten ſome of the weightier precepts of the Goſpel, they would quickly lay aſide that vain fondneſs they have for themſelves, they would caſt an eye upon their deformities, as well as upon their excellencies; and then they would begin a little to contract their plumes, and think others as good, if not better then themſelves; and no longer diſturb the peace of the Church, upon this account, becauſe they have not thoſe honorable places in it, which they vainly and groundleſly think they do deſerve.

Secondly, a ſecond cauſe or reaſon of theſe perſons ſeparating from the Church, and conſequently diſturbing the peace and unity of it, is intereſt, or, the deſire of gaining riches and money, what ſin is there indeed that the charming force of theſe will not perſwade ſome men to? *Judas* betrayed his Maſter for Thirty Pieces of Silver; and the Husbandmen (in the parable) inſtigate and prompt each other to murder, and to kill the heir, to get the inheritance to themſelves. *The love of money* (ſays the Apoſtle) *is the root of all evil,* 1. *Tim.* 6. 10. And therefore, why may it not be ſuppoſed to be the root of this evil we are now ſpeaking of (*viz*) of the diſturbance of the peace of the Church? Nay! he that reads but the next words following, in the Text forenamed, will find that the Apoſtle hath aſſerted as much himſelf. *The love of money* (ſays he) *is the root of all evil; which while ſome have coveted after, they have erred from the Faith.* And the ſame Apoſtle, St. *Paul,* hath left an inſtance of it upon record, 2. *Tim.* 4. 10. Demas *hath forſaken me, having loved this preſent world.* There is no queſtion, but that ſome of thoſe Doctrines, which make the partition wall betwixt us and the Church of *Rome* ſomewhat higher, and which they are ſo zealous to maintain, are oweing meerly to intereſt, and to the profit they get by them. As I could inſtance in their Doctrines about purgatory, about pardons

dons and indulgences, their Praying for the Dead, and ſuch like; which would certainly fall to the ground, were it not for their intereſt and profit to uphold them. And there is as little queſtion to be made, but that moſt of the zealous Preachers in the ſeparated congregations, would ſoon return to that Church, which they have cauſleſly left and forſaken, were it not for the profit and advantage they reap by it. They find a more fruitful crop, as to temporal advantage, by ſowing in thoſe by-fields and unlawful encloſures, then they could expect by laboring in Gods Vineyard, where alone they ought to have been true Laborers and work-men. Though I will not ſay, that the Diſciples and followers of theſe men do ſo highly affect them, as to pluck out their eyes for their ſakes, as St. *Paul* tells us the *Galathians*, once would have done for his; yet it is eaſy to be obſerved, by any that will but a little inquire into it, that their liberality and bounty is ſo great towards them, that many of them will almoſt ſtarve themſelves and their families, to feed and to cloth their admired teachers; they will leave themſelves neither ſcrip, nor ſhooes, nor purſe, rather then not be contributers towards filling the purſes of thoſe, whom they look upon to be the only ſoul-ſaving teachers. They make but little conſcience to rob their Pariſh Miniſters of their Dues, to beſtow them upon theſe Houſe Preachers. Like the wicked ſons of *Athaliah* the uſurper, they take away the dedicated things from the houſe of God, to beſtow them upon *Baalim*, 2. *Chro.* 24. 7. And while they find their admirers ſo bountiful to them, it's no wonder if they continue their ſeparation from the Church, and uſe their utmoſt endeavors to keep up a faction, which (it's well known) affords more profit to the greater part of them, then thoſe livings which the beſt of them held, during the ſad times of confuſion. So long as they can, by this craft, get ſuch a plentiful livelyhood, it's no wonder; if (like the Silverſmiths at *Epheſus*) they decry Apoſtolical Doctrine and Government it's ſelf, and cry up their own fancies, as the only *Diana*'s to be worſhipped. But would to God theſe perſons would timely conſider, what is like to be the iſſue of this; whether this be

any

any better then to make gain their godlineſs, and what it can profit, though they ſhould gain the whole world, and loſe their own ſouls at leaſt, if not the ſouls of others too thereby at the laſt. Would they would conſider how much alike they are, to the Prieſts and Prophets of *Iſrael*, ſpoken of by the Prophet *Micah*, Chap. 3. 11. *Who did teach for hire, and Divine for money* (i. e.) they taught ſuch Doctrines as they knew to be moſt pleaſing to their hearers, not regarding the truth, and that too meerly for the ſake of profit. And yet will theſe too (as well as they) lean upon the Lord and ſay, is not the Lord amongſt us? None evil can come upon us. But let them read the next verſe, and ſee what is like to be the iſſue and event of this: *Therefore ſhall* Sion *for your ſakes be plowed like a field, and* Jeruſalem *ſhall become heaps.* But

3ly. *ult.* A third cauſe or reaſon of theſe perſons ſeparating from our Church, and conſequently diſturbing the peace and unity of it, is a fond and unjuſtifiable deſire of preſerving their reputation and credit. I do not deſign hereby to blame any man, for uſing his utmoſt care to keep a good name, becauſe it is a thing ſo tender, that (like a glaſs that is broken and ſhatter'd in pieces) if it be once loſt, it is very hardly recovered. A good name is rather to be choſen then great riches, ſays *Solomon.* It is a pearl of ſuch ineſtimable value, that there is no man that truly weighs it, but would (with the Merchant in the parable) part with all he hath rather then go without it. It is not this, I ſay, that I do in the leaſt deſign to ſpeak againſt. But there are a ſort of perſons in the world that are much to be blamed, who having once eſpouſed an opinion, having once been patrons of a cauſe, and abettors of a faction, and having thereby procured the name of zealous and holy men, we may as ſoon remove mountains as perſwade them to renounce that cauſe, though never ſo much convinced of the unjuſtifiableneſs of it; and all becauſe (as they phraſe it) they ſhall thereby give ſcandal to the world, but, in plain terms, it is becauſe they ſhall for ever loſe that name, and reputation they have gotten for it. That this is the plain Engliſh of the buſineſs,

ſineſs, whatever is pretended to the contrary, will moſt evidently appear, if we may but look a little back to what hath heretofore paſſed. Time was, when moſt of our diſſenting teachers, might have kept their livings upon their conformity. This favor was offerr'd to them (though but little deſerving it) by our gracious Prince upon his return to his undoubted rights. Upon this, how notorious is it, that they met together to conſult and debate upon it. They perſwaded the people, that they ſpent their time in faſting and ſeeking God to direct their conſciences, but we have more reaſon to think, that they were conſulting their own credit, and whether, upon their conformity, the people would not only deride them but hate them too, for ſetting up thoſe things upon deliberation, which they before had raſhly and unadviſedly pull'd down. We can never imagine that they could be ſtrangers to the Government and Diſcipline of the Church, unleſs we will make them of the number of thoſe, who ſpoke evil of thoſe things they underſtood not. We can never imagine, that they could be ignorant of what would be required of them, before they could be admitted into it. And therefore, if it was ſo plain a buſineſs that there conſciences would not ſuffer them to conform, why did they not at very firſt profeſs it openly, and tell the world as much without any more ado? and without ſo many meetings and debates about it? No! no! they then thought (what ſome of them have plainly enough declared ſince) that they did not ſcruple what we do, but only they thought it unhandſome (*i. e.*) not for their credit for them to do it. But ſurely, if it be better for a man, that hath been overtaken in a fault to confeſs it, and to do ſo no more, as I ſuppoſe they will none of them deny; then is it better too for them to renounce thoſe erroneous tenets, which occaſion'd their former diſlike of our Church, and to evidence that they were miſtaken by their free and open complyance with it. And this would be ſo farr from procuring ſhame, in the thoughts of all ſober and conſidering men, that it would be very much their glory. Let them call to mind the many examples of this kind that have gone before them. Let them but peruſe St.

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Auſtine's retractations, and there they'l find a copy which I could wiſh they would imitate and write after. Let them conſider, whether a little falſe glory be of weight enough, to be put in the ſcale againſt the peace of the Church. If they have not an infallibility amongſt them equal with that of *Rome*, they will think, that they might be miſtaken and deceived. Let them view that place of St. *Paul*, and apply it to themſelves, 1. *Cor.* 13. 11. *when I was a Child, I ſpake as a Child, I underſtood as a Child, I thought as a Child, but when I became a man, I put away Childiſh things*. If theſe and ſuch like conſiderations will not work upon them, to renounce and forſake their former errors, for fear of loſing their reputation, of being called wavering men, and time-ſervers and the like; certainly they are of a quite different ſtrain from the Apoſtles, *who rejoyced that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for Gods ſake*, *Acts* 5. 41. and are to be ranked amongſt thoſe timerous rulers of the Jews, (*John* 12) *who believed on our Saviour Chriſt, but becauſe of the* Phariſees, *they did not confeſs him, being lovers of the praiſe of men more then of the praiſe of God.* And thus have I now ſhew'd you what are the true cauſes and reaſons of the ſeparation from our Church, and conſequently of the diſturbance of it's peace and unity, as to the teaching and leading part of our diſſenters.

I proceed now to ſpeak of the ſecond ſort of our diſſenters, thoſe that forſake the publick aſſemblies, and ſo diſturb the unity and peace of the Church (*viz*) the well meaning, but ignorant and deluded vulgar.

As firſt of all, the firſt cauſe or reaſon of theſe perſons diſlike of our Church, and conſequently of their ſeparation from it, is prejudice; whereby I mean that which proceeds from education. It is certainly true, that nothing makes a deeper impreſſion upon us, nothing is more hard y routed out, then thoſe documents and inſtructions which we receive in our infancy and Child-hood.

Quo ſemel eſt imbuta recens ſervabit odorem teſta diu

The veſſel retains a guſt or tincture of that liquor that was firſt put into it. The firſt principles we imbibe are not commonly

written in ſand, to be defaced by every blaſt of wind; but they are commonly as durable, as if they were engraved with an iron pen in braſs or marble. It is a common expreſſion amongſt us, that poſſeſſion is an eleven points of the Law. But ſure enough, that perſon that hath the education and training up of Children in any Religion, hath odds enough againſt any other that ſhall come after him; for while the wax was warm and ſoft, he clapt his ſeal upon it, and that impreſſion, we know, cannot eaſily be altered. Prejudice is ſo ſore an evil, that it will render the moſt convincing teſtimonies ineffectual. And of this the *Jews*, in rejecting the *Meſſias*, is an everlaſting inſtance. There was not ſo much as one ſingle circumſtance, either of time or place, of lineage or deſcent, of Doctrine or miracles, which their own writings had foretold him by, but he anſwer'd it exactly. But they having imbibed an opinion, that the *Meſſias* was to be a great temporal Prince, that ſhould fight their Battels and free them from all ſlavery; becauſe they could not diſcover this in him, they therefore became blind as to all other Characters. If then it fared ſo ill with our Saviour himſelf upon the account of prejudice, what wonder is it, if the Church of *England* be deſpiſed and rejected too upon the ſame ſcore? How commonly hath this Church (which is abſolutely the beſt reformed Church throughout the whole world) been branded with the odious names, of ſuperſtition and Popery, from which (as I have ſhewed) ſhe is the moſt innocent and free? How commonly have perſons, in our late ſad times, been trained up in an utter abhorrence of her? How frequently have we found ſome perſons ſo prejudiced and incenſed againſt her, that, if we go about to undeceive them, and to give them better information, they will look upon us as their utter enemies, and they are ready to cry out to us (as the poſſeſſed did to our Saviour in the Goſpel) what have we to do with you? Are you come to torment us? altogether forgetting that caution of St. *John*, 1. *John* 4. 1. Of trying the ſpirits, whether they be of God or no; and that for a very good reaſon which he hath there laid down, becauſe there are many falſe Prophets that

are gone out into the world. Moſt ſad it is to think that poor Souls ſhould be ſo obſtinate, and ſo reſolutely unwilling to hear good inſtructions, and that they ſhould be thus afraid of thoſe that mean nothing but their good. They have been taught from their cradle to think ill of this Church, and in that they think themſelves wiſe enough, and who is he that can be admitted to inſtruct them? But alas! this is that which will highly aggravate their fault, and make it indelible. For upon this account it was, that our Saviour told the *Phariſees*, *John* 9. 41. *If ye were blind, ye ſhould have no ſin, but now ye ſay, we ſee, therefore your ſin remaineth.* This then, I ſay, is the firſt cauſe or reaſon of theſe perſons diſlike of our Church, and conſequently of their ſeparation from it (*viz*) prejudice.

Secondly, A ſecond cauſe or reaſon of theſe perſons diſlike of our Church, and conſequently of their ſeparation from it, is the want of Chriſtian charity, I mean charity for their Governors; which if it could once be received and entertained amongſt thoſe many Goſpel-graces, which they think themſelves to be the only poſſeſſors of, we might then have ſome hopes of ſeeing them come into our Churches, and there to profeſs and hold, the ſame faith with us in the unity of the ſpirit and in the bond of peace. Sure I am, that if we ſhould go into any of the ſeparated congregations and confuſed aſſemblies, a great part of that multitude could give us no good account of that concourſe; if we ſhould queſtion them about it: And if ſome of them ſhould tell us, that they are there met together to worſhip God, yet I am confident, that (like that uproar that was ſtirred up by the Silver-ſmiths at *Epheſus*, *Acts* 19) the more part of them could not tell, wherefore they ſhould come to worſhip God there rather then in the publick and ſolemn aſſemblies. Perhaps ſome of them might tell us, that there they have pure ordinances, and a true Goſpel-worſhip, and that in our Churches there is nothing but ſuperſtition and Popery, a mixt worſhip, and a ſerving of God after the Commandments of men. But then, if we ask them further, what they mean by ſuperſtition, and will-worſhip, and by ſerving God after

after the Commandments of men, and the like; they are as little able to give us any good account, as the Child that is yet to learn his A. B. C. Like Parrots, they have only learnt the expreſſion and the ſound, but as for the true ſenſe and meaning of the words, that they are altogether ſtrangers to. And too many of them, God knows! are like to continue ſo; for their Rabbi's and Teachers will never inſtruct them in it, for that would utterly ſpoil their trade; and they will not learn it of others. And therefore could we but once preſs them to a reception of that ſuper-excellent, and truely-goſpel grace, charity, how much would it tend to the abating at leaſt, if not to the utter eradicating all hard conceits, either of our Church, or, of the Governors of it, out of their minds. St. *Paul* the Apoſtle in the 13. Chap. of his 1. Epiſtle to the *Cor.* gives us a very larg deſcription, and a very high Encomium of charity; and amongſt divers others, tells us, that theſe are its properties; *to ſuffer long and to be kind, not to behave it's ſelf unſeemly, not to be overhaſty to think any evil, to bear all things, to believe all things, to hope all things, and to endure all things.* And were it not, I ſay, for want of this, they would not thus deſpiſe Government, and ſpeak evil of thoſe things which they ſo little underſtand. The forenamed Apoſtle hath taken all the care imaginable to prevent any ſuch thing. He hath ſtrictly commanded us, *Heb.* 13. 17. *To obey them that have the rule over us, and to ſubmit our ſelves.* And as if he had foreſeen, that men would be ready to withhold their obedience to the commands of their Governors, under a pretence, that the things they command are not plain and clear to them, and therefore, for ought they know, may be unlawful. As if he had foreſeen, I ſay, this pretence, he hath annexed a very ſtrong reaſon, to enforce their obedience to all things of this nature, which is this, for they watch for your Souls (ſays he) as they that muſt give account. Which is as much as if he had ſaid more at large thus. If your Superiors do command and enjoyn any thing that is lawful, nay! ſuppoſe that it be in ſome meaſure doubtful whether it be lawful or no, yet in all things of this nature you muſt be obedient. It

is not a bare conceit and fancy, that the thing commanded may be unlawful, that will excuſe your diſobedience; for there is nothing leſs then a plain command of God to the contrary, that can ſuperſede the commands of your Governors. And becauſe many of you may be apt to be overmiſtruſtful of the wiſdom, of the ſincerity and integrity of your Governors, and ſo may be as apt to ſuſpend your obedience to them, till you your ſelves ſhall ſee a very good reaſon for the thing commanded; do but conſider that your Governors are placed over you by God himſelf, that they watch for your Souls, their main buſineſs is to ſee that you lead your lives in all godlineſs and honeſty; Nay! conſider further, that they muſt all give an account unto God at the great and generai audit, when the ſecrets of all hearts ſhall be revealed, how they have acquitted themſelves in ſuch offices and employments. And therefore you may not without the plaineſt reaſon ſuſpect their good intentions; whatſoever they define and lay down, they define not only for you but for themſelves too, they do not only teach others but themſelves alſo. And therefore if you had but common Chriſtian charity for your Governors, you would never thus deny obedience to their commands, nor withdraw your ſelves from the communion of our Church, in which there is nothing at all enjoyned or commanded, but what is altogether agreeable with, or, at leaſt, no ways contrary to, the word of God. Again.

Thirdly, *ult.* Another cauſe or reaſon of thoſe perſons diſlike of our Church, and conſequently of their ſeparation from it, is (if I may ſo expreſs it) for want of a due uſe of their Chriſtian liberty. This perhaps may ſeem a little ſtrange to ſome perſons at firſt, becauſe this is one of their great pleas, for their not yielding obedience to their Governors in things indifferent (*viz*) that their commanding and enjoyning ſuch things, doth too much intrench upon their Chriſtian liberty, and would again entangle them in the yoke of Bondage. But yet I queſtion not but to make it good. And if they would but impartially conſult the true meaning of that Text, which they ſo commonly have recourſe

to,

to, *Gall.* 5. 1. They would find that the liberty which the Apoſtle there ſpeaks of, is not that liberty which they challenge to themſelves. That freedom which our Saviour Chriſt purchas'd for us, is a freedom from ſin, freedom from the curſe of the law, freedom from the ceremonial Law of *Moſes*, as Circumciſion and Sacrifices, and the like, and not in the leaſt any freedom from paying our obedience, to the commands of our Governors in all lawful and indifferent things. And it is a wonder to me, that any man ſhould be ſo much beſides himſelf as to think, that the leaſt drop of Chriſts Blood was ſo vainly ſpent, as to purchaſe freedom for us in things abſolutely indifferent (*i. e.*) in ſuch things as were in their own nature indifferent, concerning which there was no command. For theſe were free before, and therefore free to be performed before and after they are commanded, only the command is neceſſarily to be obeyed. Their great ſcrupuloſity and timerouſneſs as to the uſe of ſuch indifferent and harmleſs ceremonies, and which God hath no where forbidden, will rank them amongſt thoſe nice *Jewiſh* Chriſtians, of which the Apoſtle St. *Paul* ſpeaks, *Coloſ.* 2. 21. Who cry'd out, *touch not*, *taſt not*, *handle not*, and that too upon the ſame account, after the Doctrines and Commandments of men. For God, I ſay, hath no where prohibited the uſe of them, and they have no other reaſon for their not uſing them, but becauſe thoſe teachers which they have heaped up unto themſelves, do tell them, that they muſt not uſe them. And therefore we may apply that ſaying of our Saviour to the *Jews*, *John.* 5. 43. unto theſe people, and ſay, though your Governors come to you in the name of God, who hath entruſted them with the care of theſe things, and therefore they may very lawfully enjoyn them, yet theſe you will not hear; but if another come in his own name, and tells you without any reaſon at all, that you may not uſe them, him you will receive and hear. Thus they can ſuffer fools gladly; if another man bring them into bondage, they can ſuffer it patiently enough; but if their Governors command no more then what they may ſafely comply with, then they kick and fling and will by no means

endure

endure it, then they cry out of a reſtraint of their Chriſtian liberty, whilſt alas! they are the greateſt ſlaves to the Doctrines and commandments of other men. And thus I ſay, it is for want of a due uſe of their Chriſtian liberty, that makes them out of conceit with our Church, and conſequently to ſeparate and divide from it. And now I have done with my Text; and ſhew'd you (which was the main point of it) that it is a duty highly concerning and much incumbent upon all Chriſtians to endeavor the ſafety, and to pray for the peace of the Church. And therefore, let us all, in the concluſion, be perſwaded, in our ſeveral places and ſtations, to uſe the utmoſt of our endeavors thereunto. *If I forget thee*, O Jeruſalem, *let my right hand forget her cunning* (ſays holy *David*) *and if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth*, *Pſalm.* 137. 5. 6. verſes. Let us not forget her many enemies, eſpecially thoſe *Edomites* (be they Papiſts or others) that cry out down with her, down with her, even to the ground. And as for ſuch as theſe, let us pray unto God, that he would abate their pride, aſſwage their malice, and confound all their devices. And as for others, who may poſſibly mean well, but are moſt miſerably miſled and deluded, let us pray unto God, that it would pleaſe him to bring into the way of truth all ſuch as have erred and are deceived. And let us not forget to pray for our Governors too, let us pray unto God, that it would pleaſe him to bleſs and keep the Magiſtrates, giving them grace to execute juſtice and to maintain truth. And by ſo doing, we may the better expect and hope for the preſervation of our religion, and for the proſperity and ſafety and *peace of our* Jeruſalem, even ſo long, till we ſhall all come to the enjoyment of the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, and to aſſociate with an innumerable company of Angels; till we ſhall come to the general aſſembly and Church of the firſt born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the judg of all, and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect. Which that we all of us may, God of his infinite mercy grant for the merits ſake of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, to whom with the Father and the holy ſpirit, be all honor and glory and praiſe now and for ever. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

A Letter Written to a Young Gentleman (*a* Roman *Catholick*) *in* Warwick-ſhire.

SIR,

THE extraordinary kindneſs I have for you, as a Friend, and the care I have for your Soul, as a Chriſtian, together with your late importunity, for a few Lines from me in reference to your Religion, hath forced me to put Pen to Paper in the performance of a Task, which otherwiſe I ſhould hardly have been perſwaded to. I am conſcious enough of my own inabilities, and I was Three or Four days in ſuſpence, whether I ſhould comply with your deſire or no. And the greateſt Remora was, the little good that I could promiſe to my ſelf from ſuch an undertaking, and that upon a double account. Firſt, in regard I knew you to be Educated in the *Romiſh* Religion from your very Cradle, and ſo muſt needs have ſuck't in ſuch prejudices againſt the Proteſtants, as were not to be rooted out but by a perſon of greater skill and ſtrength then my ſelf. And Secondly, in regard of what I have already intimated, (*viz.*) my great inability for it. But when I began to conſider and recollect what great things God Almighty (who turns the Hearts of the Children of Men as he pleaſes) hath ſometimes wrought by weak Inſtruments, I preſently reſolved upon the work, and then to leave the iſſue and ſucceſs to him, who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleaſure.

Your former careleſneſs, and your earneſt importunity of late, for ſome ſatisfaction as to the Principles of your Religion, brings to my mind what I have oftentimes been told of ſome Sea-men and Marriners, ſuch as (according to the Royal Prophets expreſſion) go down to the Sea in Ships, and do their buſineſs in great Waters, who, though at other times they have been careleſs and prophane enough, even ſo far as to bid defiance to the Heavens, and to the Powers above; yet when the Stormy Winds and Tempeſts have roſe upon them, and have threatned them with an inevitable

inevitable Ship-wrack and Deſtruction, have then been all on a ſudden rouſed and awak'd, and have fall'n upon their knees in Prayer to that God, in whom before they hardly ſeemed to believe. You know (I preſume) the old *Maxim*, *Similitudo non curret quatuor pedibus*. And therefore though it will not be accommodated to you in all reſpects, yet thus, I think it may. I have often heard you highly applauding the Church of *Rome*, and ſo highly extolling the goodneſs of the *Romiſh* Religion, as to ſeem utterly to diſlike that of the Proteſtants, and to give but little regard to any thing that could or might be ſaid, in vindication of the truth and purity of it. This indeed was moſtly, while the ſeaſon was ſerene and calm enough towards thoſe of that Religion, and the Penal ſtatutes that have heretofore been made againſt them, but rarely put in execution. But ſince the diſcovery of a late damnable and bloody Plot, of ſome at leaſt, if not of moſt of the Papiſts in *England*, againſt the perſon of a mild and Gracious Prince, even to the taking away his life, and by that means to extirpate the Proteſtant Religion hath alarm'd the higher Powers, and given them ſufficient reaſon to inflict the utmoſt rigor and ſeverity of the Laws upon the whole crew: This may perchance have contributed ſomething towards the rouzing and awakening you too, to make ſome ſcrutiny and ſearch into the goodneſs of that Religion of the Proteſtants, that hath prompted them to ſo much mildneſs and gentleneſs towards you, and into the Principles of that Religion of the Papiſts, which puts her votaries (both Prieſts and Laicks) upon ſuch ungrateful, bloody and unjuſtifiable practiſes. By what hath already paſſed (upon this account) againſt thoſe of your Religion, we may nearly gueſs what will be further done. And ſurely you have but little reaſon to think, but that thoſe who ſhall refuſe the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, when tender'd to them, ſhall have the utmoſt ſeverity of the Laws inflicted upon them. And what thoſe Laws are, I think you have no need of any information.

Really Sir I hate an Hypocrite in Religion with all my heart, ſuch *Jeſuits* (as I remember Mr. *Gale* calls them) that are for that Religion that makes moſt for their intereſt, be it what it will. And

I would never go about to perſwade any one to renounce, and forſake a good Religion, and thereby to hazard his ſoul (which is more worth than a thouſand worlds) to ſave an eſtate. And the great Author of our Chriſtian Religion hath told us, that whoſoever doth not bear his Croſs and come after him, he cannot be his Diſciple. But all that I would perſwade you to is ſeriouſly to enquire, whether that Religion you now profeſs, be a good Religion or no. And let me tell you this, that ſuch a zeal as puts a man upon the loſs of an eſtate, for the ſake of that Religion into which he was drawn, when he ſcarce knew the difference betwixt good and evil, and hath been ever ſince kept in the dark; and not permitted to ſearch into the ſoundneſs and goodneſs of it; as it is an unjuſtifiable zeal, becauſe not according to knowledge; ſo it is never to be expected, that it ſhould be rewarded with Houſes and Lands in this world, or with Glory in the world to come. Be perſwaded therefore to enquire into the grounds of your Religion, before you expoſe your ſelf to ſuch inconveniences, and loſſes for it's ſake. Conſult ſome able conſcientious Divines of the Church of *England* about it, and I am ſure you are not altogether a ſtranger to ſome, who are able and will be willing to give you all reaſonable ſatisfaction. It is a piece of natural juſtice, to hear both Parties ſpeak before we condemn either. Doth our Law judge any one before it hear him, and know what he doth; ſaid *Nicodemus* a Ruler of the *Jews*? But truely I think that the neglect of conſulting the Writings of the Divines of the Church of *England*, and the over-eaſie belief of whatever your Prieſts do buzz into your ears, may juſtly expoſe moſt of your Religion, to the cenſure of having too much partiality, and too little juſtice. But, Pray Sir, do but conſider the wonderful charms of Empire and riches, and to what horrid impieties, they have ſometimes hurried the greateſt part of men. And why may not moſt of thoſe Doctrines, which the Church of *Rome* is ſo zealous to maintain, be no other (for any thing you know yet) then what do altogether flow from the mighty thirſt after riches and Empire, which many of the Popes of *Rome* have been eminently remarkable for? I think I could name

ſome that have had their ſole riſe and ſpring from thence, but that I ſtudy all poſſible brevity. But however, let me mind you of conſulting their Doctrines about Purgatory, about Pardons and Indulgences, and thoſe of depoſing (as they call them) Heretical Kings and Princes. And I am perſwaded you will find, that the only root from whence they did at firſt ſpring, was no other (whatever is pretended) then that forenamed. The fire of Purgatory keeps the old Gentleman warm, his Pardons and Indulgences fill his holineſſe's Coffers; The ſaying Maſſes for the dead, brings in ſo many good rents, that the Prieſts ſtand in no great need of help from the living. This is the craft by which they get their wealth, and therefore theſe Doctrines are the great *Diana*'s amongſt them. The Church *of Rome* hath at all times, ever ſince the Reformation, been charged by the Divines of the Church of *England*, with that damnable ſin of Idolatry. And if you could be perſwaded impartially, to peruſe the late writings of the Learned and well-read Doctor *Stillingfleet*, you would begin to ſuſpect, that they of that Church are not altogether free from it. Their praying to Saints, their Doctrines of merits, their depriving the Laity of the Cup in the Holy Sacrament of the Lords Supper, and many other ſuch like things as I could name, are clearly and directly contrary to the Holy Scriptures. And this too you would be fully convinc'd of, if you could once be perſwaded to read them. And to what purpoſe were they written and delivered to the World, but that they might be read? Do not therefore any longer ſuffer your Prieſts, to take away that Key of knowledge from you, who will not enter in themſelves, nor (by their good will) ſuffer others, that are willing to enter. You had need to have an extraordinary good opinion of thoſe who keep you thus in the dark. For my part, ſhould they deal thus with me, I ſhould very much doubt their honeſt intentions; and at leaſt conclude, that they look'd upon me either as a Mad-man or a Fool. And ſome expreſſions that have fall'n from their Pens of late, makes me apt to believe, that they have ſcarce any better thoughts of moſt Lay men of your Religion. And ſurely were it not that they do think ſo, they would never have gone about to impoſe upon them,

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ſuch ridiculous fopperies and Pageant-like ceremonies, ſo far from being grave and ſignificant, and ſuch as may become Religion, that I have oftentimes thought, that as it was in Heathen *Rome* heretofore, ſo it is in *Rome* Chriſtian (*viz*) that your Prieſts have much ado, to contain from ſmiling when they meet one another in the ſtreets, to think how eaſily they Gull and delude you. Were it not that I am unwilling to tranſgreſs too much the bounds of an Epiſtle, I could ſay a great deal more (but nothing more then what's true) againſt the *Romiſh* Religion. But in regard that it was your own doings to put me upon this work, I hope you will the more readily pardon me, if I do tranſgreſs. Nevertheleſs, there is but one thing more that I ſhall at preſent ſpeak of; And that is, to ask you, how you can poſſibly fauſter or entertain any good thoughts of ſuch a Religion, as encourages and prompts men to Aſſaſſinations and murders, and ſuch like Helliſh Artifices, to propagate and uphold it? That ſome of your Religion have been lately, as well as formerly, guilty of theſe things, is ſo plainly apparent, that nothing but an unmeaſurable ſtore of confidence can deny it. And for theſe things, the Jeſuits are noted throughout a great part of the Chriſtian World; for *England* hath not been the only Scene where they have acted theſe kind of Villanies. The bloody Maſſacre in *Ireland* (which is ſtill freſh in the memories of many living) that too in *France*, and another at *Piedmont*, and elſewhere, hath ſufficiently made them known in thoſe parts. And for theſe things, they better deſerve the name of Turks than Chriſtians. And that all of that way, are not as deeply concern'd as the other, is owing more to a generous temper, and a naturally mild and tender diſpoſition, or ſuch like, then to their Religion, whoſe Principles, I am ſure, if fully underſtood and followed, would put them upon as great, and (if poſſible) greater impieties. But alas! the miſery of it is, they do not yet know the miſery of the iniquity of the Church of *Rome*; for if they did (as your Prieſts are well aware of) they would certainly be affrighted at it's diſmal ſight, and utterly renounce all Communion with it. Such Principles as lead to cruelty and blood are undoubtedly the Poſitions of the Church of *Rome*; but they are not to be diſcover'd, but at ſome certain times when their cauſe is like to be pro-

moted by them, nor but to ſome perſons whom they find to be the moſt ſavage and inhumane. They pick a jury for the Tryal, or rather, for the acting of their cauſe, out of the Butchers-roe. But once again; is that Religion, think you, true and Chriſtian that encourages rebellion, and treaſon, and murder? Alas! God would have no men to ſpeak or act wickedly for him. Their Religion is vain, and their damnation will be juſt, who do ſuch apparent evils, under a pretence they may do good thereby. Surely, theſe very things will make every ſober, well-meaning Chriſtian, to abhorr and deteſt them. Can that Religion be true and good, which will not ſuffer you to be true and loyal to your King, and to yield obedience in all lawful things, to the higher Powers, under whom God hath ſubjected us? Can that Religion be true, which will not ſuffer you to ſwear Allegiance to your Prince? or, if you do, will afterwards diſpenſe with you for the breach of ſuch an Oath; when the word of God itſelf (which is more to be hearken'd to ſurely than the Pope) hath commanded us to keep the Kings Commandment, and that in regard of the Oath of God? Can that Religion be warrantable, which would deprive Princes of their Power in the external Government of the Church, when the word of God hath all along allowed and approv'd it, as is plain throughout the whole Bible? The Popes ſupremacy (which I find you highly favor) is an unjuſt uſurpation, and there is not the leaſt intimation in the Scriptures for it; unleſs you will admit of a *Paſce oves*, feed my ſheep; or *duo lumina fecit Deus*, God made two great lights, the Sun to rule the day, the Moon and the Starrs to govern the night, as ſufficient proofs of it. And ſurely theſe texts will as little prove the Popes ſupremacy, as that text, *Abraham* begat *Iſaac*, would prove the unlawfulneſs of Non-reſidency. But did I ſay, that the Popes ſupremacy is an uſurpation? Why ſurely ſo it is, and eſpecially here in *England*, where I could never yet underſtand any good title he had to it. Whenever he had it, it was got either by fraud or force, and therefore he might very well expect to loſe it, when the right heir ſhould claim his own. The Pope, that ſtrong man armed, kept it by meer force and ſtrength for a while; but at length came *Henry* the Eighth, who being a Prince of courage and ſtronger than the Pope, threw him out, and

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the Kings of *England*, his Succeſſors, have all reaſon to ſee to the keeping poſſeſſion of that, that is one of the moſt precious Jewels of the Crown. To be brief, Sir, I would earneſtly importune you to conſult the Oaths of Allegiance and ſupremacy, which will (it's preſum'd) e're long be tender'd to you. And I verily believe that you can find nothing at all in either of them but what may very ſafely be taken by all good Chriſtians. And when you have taken them, let me as earneſtly importune you to keep them; for however ſome may pleaſe themſelves with the Popes diſpenſation, and think that that will juſtifie and excuſe them, in the breach of thoſe or either of thoſe Oaths; yet God himſelf hath told us, that he will not hold them guiltleſs (*i.e.*) he will ſeverely puniſh and revenge himſelf upon thoſe, who take his name in vain. I have but one thing more to ſay, which juſt now comes into my mind, and that will relate to an expreſſion which (in my own hearing) came lately from you. You was ſaying, not long ſince, that if you ſhould change your Religion, yet you would hardly do it at this time, becauſe (as you then ſaid) the world would think, that you did it more out of fear then conſcience. The very expreſſion (my thought) did portend ſome good, and put me in ſome little hopes of a change. But I beſeech you Sir, if you have any convictions wrought in you of the goodneſs, of the purity and peaceableneſs of the Proteſtant Religion, and of the quite contrary qualities of the *Romiſh*, take heed of ſmothering & ſtifeling ſuch convictions (though but for an hour) for that may tend to the utter ruin of you both here and hereafter. Let no man refuſe to hear, when God Almighty calls. Never be afraid or aſham'd to own and embrace that Religion, which (if you live but up to the Principles of it) will render you a true Servant to God, a loyal ſubject to your King, and a faithful friend to your friend, though his perſwaſion in Religion be never ſo differing.

And let me tell you this Sir, that I could never yet perſwade my ſelf, that a *Roman* Catholick (*quatenus Roman* Catholick) could ever be reckon'd as a good Chriſtian, a Loyal Subject, or a true Friend. And now Sir, that you may be no longer a ſtranger, to the Pious Devotions of that Church, in whoſe Communion I (as well as many others) ſhould be very glad and joyful to ſee you, I have ſent you herewith

herewith, the Book of Common-Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies according to the use of the Church of *England*, desiring you seriously to peruse it, and to accept of it, as a gift and present from your Friend. In which Book, you will find the most Pious, Pethy, and well-composed Prayers, which are made unto God (who is the only hearer of Prayers) and not to the Saints, who are altogether ignorant of us, which are made in the Name of Jesus Christ, there being no other Name given unto Men whereby they can be Saved; which, in short, are such Prayers, that any one that knows but the *English* Tongue, may readily understand, and thereby know, what it is he begs of God, and that he doth not ask for a Stone, when he intends Bread; or for a Serpent, when he intends a Fish; which the ignorant People of the Church of *Rome*, who say their Prayers in an unknown Tongue, cannot be assured of.

Thus Sir I have answered your desire, in giving you some short *Memento*'s of the unsoundness of the *Romish* Religion. And if you require farther proof of it, I will then refer you to the Writings of some of our Famous and Learned Divines of the Church of *England*, and to which there was never any Reply yet made, that could deserve the name of an Answer. And really Sir, it is no little evidence of the weakness of their cause, when they have no other Arguments to defend it with, than Daggers and Pistols. You see Sir, that I have answered your request in bestowing a Sheet of Paper upon you, with what intent and design you put me upon it, you know best. But if it was no worse then with what I Writ it, I may then be confident of a favorable reception, and candid interpretation of these few Lines, from him, who is, Sir,

Your unfeigned Friend,

and Servant, &c.

Decemb. 2 1678.

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